

57 West Hill Ave. Melrose.

I'm Andy Monat. Speaking on behalf of Transit Matters, a nonprofit advocating for efficient, effective and reliable public transportation in Cambridge & rest of Boston area.

Policy Orders 34 and 35

Thank councillor Mazen for introducing ~~resolutions~~ in favor of transit priority, queue jump lanes, and other ways to make buses faster.

MBTA buses in Cambridge are slow, arrive irregularly & can be severely overcrowded. Service levels have not kept pace with rapid ridership increases as population and employment soar, yet **worsening traffic congestion has increased bus travel times.**

There are **many things the city can do** to improve transit which serves residents and people who work in Cambridge.

The **city controls the streets** the T's buses operate on. Cambridge has taken many successful steps over the years to reduce car travel, but ~~cars~~ *buses* are still subject to the congestion created by cars. A **bus carrying 50 people - and serving hundreds more on the same trip - should be prioritized** over cars carrying one person.

*The same applies to buses run by universities, hospitals, and the EZ-Ride which is largely funded by employer fees imposed by the Council.*  
Transit priority is effective and can reduce travel times by up to 20 percent, making buses faster, more reliable and more competitive with private cars. Time savings can be reinvested in increased frequency, limited-stop routes, or more service elsewhere.

Equally important is a joint initiative between the city and the MBTA to switch to a system of paying fares at the bus stop before boarding.

*We know how to do all these things.* The technology to grant buses priority at traffic signals is inexpensive and readily available. Street design changes like bus lanes, curb extensions and queue jump lanes can often be installed inexpensively using temporary materials, and can become standard procedure (like bike lanes) in new projects.

Cambridge should take the lead on transit priority as it did when the city installed the region's first bike lanes over a decade ago.

We at Transit Matters look forward to working with the City on these important issues.

Thank you.